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SUBJECT: IRAQ: VICE PRESIDENT OF NATIONAL COUNCIL
REPORTS ON ELECTION PLANS, KIRKUK

1. Summary: Hamid Majid Musa, Vice President of the Iraqi National Council, told Ankara-based diplomats that January 2005 elections were on track despite the insurgency. On Kirkuk, he said that if the TAL-established Iraqi Property Claims Commission fails to resolve the population distribution issues in Kirkuk, the UN would need to do so. End summary.

2. On Sept. 25, the Vice President of the Iraqi National Council, Hamid Majid Musa, provided a one-hour briefing for Ankara diplomats on the current situation in Iraq. PMA FSN attended. Majid Musa criticized the media for not reflecting the truth about Iraq's improving security situation. He said national elections planned for January would take place despite the flaring insurgency. Majid Musa acknowledged that there had been security problems in the northwest of Iraq, but he believed that would not prevent people from voting. He called on Iraq's friends to support these elections.

3. Majid Musa reported that the 100-member National Council has prepared draft legislation on Iraq's political structures, including the status of political parties. He explained that the Ministry of Planning would register all political parties and that parties with 500 signatures would enter the parliamentary election. The process will exclude ex-Baath Party members and politicians (whatever the name of their party).

4. He further explained that Iraqis would also vote for local province officials on the same day. According to Majid Musa the Election Committee would decide on who was eligible to vote in terms of nationality and age by consulting the records of the Ministry of Planning, information on oil-for-food cards, and population records. Iraqis living abroad would be able to vote at functioning Iraqi Embassies. Majid Musa indicated that ideally they preferred having nomination of all parties (i.e. secular democratic parties currently with 60 seats and Islamist parties with 40 seats) in one list; if not in 2???? Majid Musa expressed that the reason for dividing political parties into the 2 mentioned groups was reducing power of Islamic groups in order to prevent formation of an Islamic government.

5. Regarding Kirkuk, Majid Musa stated that the Transitional Administrative Law had assigned the Iraqi Property Claims Commission (IPCC) to deal with the situation of Kirkuk, including repatriation and population movements. In case the commission could not solve the Kirkuk issue, the UN would be assigned to solve it. According to Majid Musa, a census of Kirkuk would be completed before October 16.

6. In response to a question regarding situation of Feili Kurds, who had been expelled to Iran and were stateless, Majid Musa indicated that the TAL offered protection to them by providing them with identity cards as well as employment opportunities, and the possibility of having their property restored to them.

7. Baghdad minimize considered.

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